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THE BOSTON MEETING.

The Department of Superintendence of the National Educational Association held its annual session in Boston, February 21-23. In giving a brief report of so important a meeting, the writer attempts only a summary of the salient points in the papers and discussions. The printed proceedings may be obtained with the report of the International Educational Congress at Chicago.

President Brooks presided. A paper on "Wood-work in Grammar Schools" by Superintendent Curtis, New Haven, Conn., was the first presented to the meeting. The speaker emphasized the educational value of manual training altogether apart from utilitarian considerations. He outlined a course in wood-work, enumerating the number and kinds of tools, and the cost of material. The work should be done in the school room under the supervision of the regular teacher. It would occupy thirty minutes three times a week, and ought to be compulsory for both boys and girls. The discussion was opened by Superintendent Meleney of Somerville, who gave a history of the work in Boston, and described the difference between the Prussian and Swedish systems. He pointed out the necessity of having well-trained, competent, instructors, and of basing the work on educational principles. Principal Kilbon of the Manual Training School, Springfield, Mass., gave an account of the work done in his school.

The next paper was on "The Study of English in Public Schools." * The discussion which followed was participated in by J. H. Blodgett of the Census Bureau, Washington, J. T. Prince, Agent of the State Board of Education, Mass., R. A. Metcalf, Supervisor of Schools, Boston, Mass., E. A. Singer, Assistant Superintendent, Philadelphia, Pa., F. W. Parker, Cook County Normal School, Ill., Superintendent Wise, Baltimore, Md., and Superintendent Gove, Denver Col.

"Examinations and Promotions in Elementary Schools" was the next subject for discussion. Promotion, according to the speakers, should depend on the judgment of the teacher. Examinations should test the teaching rather than the knowledge of the pupils. The following gentlemen spoke on the sub-

* This paper is given in full in this number of THE SCHOOL REVIEW.

ject : Superintendent Mowry, Salem, Mass. ; J. L. Hughes, Inspector of Schools, Toronto, Canada ; R. K. Buehrle, City Superintendent, Lancaster, Pa. ; Superintendent Wise ; Superintendent Miner, North Adams, Mass. ; Superintendent Maxwell, Brooklyn ; Superintendent Hall, Arlington ; Superintendent Powell, Washington, and Col. Parker.

Superintendent A. S. Draper, Cleveland, Ohio, read a paper on "Plans of Organization for School Purposes in Large Cities." The problem of municipal government is the greatest problem in this country, and the school system is the most important part of that problem. The selection of superintendents and supervisors is at the bottom of the whole scheme of education. The following principles should characterize a city school-system : (1) The elimination of politics from the selection of school boards, or, at least, from the administration of the schools. (2) Small school boards, with members representing the whole city, and not wards or districts. (3) The complete separation of school administration from municipal business. (4) The school system of a great city must not only have an autonomy of its own, but its administration must be separated into suitable departments. A detailed account was given of the reforms which Cleveland is undertaking along these lines.

The subject of "The Supervision of City Schools" was presented to the meeting by Superintendent Maxwell. This consists of supervision by principals and by city superintendents. The latter should work largely through the former. Every principal should be held responsible for the work of his school. He should look after the sanitation of the building, know intimately the work of every room, give model lessons for his teachers, hold teachers' meetings, direct the teachers in their reading, and allow them freedom of individual action in their work. He should carry out the instruction of the school board and the superintendent, and report to the latter every method that is found to work well, and the efficiency or inefficiency of his teachers.

It is the function of the superintendent to certify teachers and to act as an executive in school matters. He should encourage scholarship by granting different grades of certificates. He should inspect and examine classes (not at stated times) in order to determine the kind of work done. Examinations, however, should not be for promotion except at the end of the grammar school course. He should hold teachers' meetings, and at these

discuss the great principles of education as well as the difficulties that have been met with in the schools. On recommendation of Superintendent Maxwell, a committee of ten was appointed to hold a series of conferences, to examine all subjects connected with the development of the Public School System and to report at the next meeting.

The next topic taken up was "The Reconstruction of the Grammar School Course." The discussion was opened with a paper by Superintendent Gilbert, St. Paul, Minn. He strongly condemned the mechanical and artificial elements in the present school course. The chief subject of study has been arithmetic, but it has not produced noble manhood. It has been greatly overrated as a study for young children. Studies must be chosen with noble content, of widest and most lasting importance. Man and nature, history and literature, and the study of the living, breathing, environment of man; these are of highest, noblest, import. Study of nature cultivates love of truth.

"The Cambridge Experiment" was described by Superintendent Cogswell, Cambridge, Mass. This consists of a change in the grammar and primary schools, in the frequency and mode of promotion, and in the kinds and amount of subject-matter taught. Promotions are no longer made on the results of written examinations. Among the changes in the subject-matter the following are to be noted: In arithmetic more mental and less written work will be given. Geometrical forms and relations, including mensuration, leading up to and including simple theorems in plane geometry are added. The application of elementary algebra to arithmetical problems may be added by any grammar school teacher. In reading, books of standard authors are to be used in place of the former readers. The language instruction pays special attention to writing and speaking English. The geography work is to begin with the elements of physical geography, and is taught objectively. Political geography is to be combined with history. Elementary physics is to be taught by the laboratory methods in the ninth grade.

Professor Hart, of Harvard, Superintendent Hardy, La Crosse, Wis., Superintendent Maxwell, Superintendent Powell, and President Eliot, of Harvard, took part in the discussion which followed. The latter called attention to the fact that the elective system relieves the routine of the teacher's work, and enables children to study advanced branches at an early age.

Dr. William T. Harris read a paper on "What do School Statistics teach in respect to the Moral Influence of Education?"*

Mr. Hudson Shaw, Fellow of Balliol College, England, gave an address on "University Extension in its Relation to the Public Education." George G. Wilson, Brown University, Wilfred Munro, Director of the University Extension, Providence, R. I., and Superintendent Treudley, Youngstown, Ohio, took part in the discussion.

Papers were given on "The Grading of Country Schools" by Editor Sabin, of the *Iowa School Journal*, and State Superintendent Poland, of New Jersey. A system of grading country schools is much needed, but we must have a system that is adapted to the conditions of these schools, and not adopt the city system.

"The Supervision of Country Schools" was treated by State Superintendent Waller, of Pennsylvania. He emphasized the need of systematic supervision, and described the manner of providing it.

Superintendent Gove of Denver, Col., dealt with the question of "The Sources of Supply of Teachers in City Schools." The average professional life of a female teacher in America is not above three and a half years; hence the need of a constant supply. The city normal school provides most of the training which teachers receive. It is desirable that the teachers employed by a city should be graduates of different normal schools, so that in their educational meetings they may enjoy the benefits that have been derived from different systems of training.

"What shall be done to increase the Efficiency of Teachers in Actual Service?" was the title of a paper given by Superintendent Balliet of Springfield, Mass. All teachers may be divided into two classes, the efficient and the inefficient. Those hopelessly inefficient should be dismissed, the others systematically trained. This can be done in two ways. First, by means of the city normal school, which every city of considerable size ought to have. Inefficient teachers should be obliged to discontinue their work for a year, and attend this institution. Secondly, by means of supervision. The work of the superintendent of the future must be to teach his corps of teachers the science of education, and to train them in the art of teaching. Every superintendent ought to be an earnest student of modern psychology, and he must not be

*This is given in full in this number of THE SCHOOL REVIEW.

satisfied with giving general lectures on psychology and pedagogical principles. He must see that they are applied to the work of teaching.

The topic next discussed was "What shall be done with Non-progressive or Retrogressive Teachers?" This was introduced by Superintendent Greenwood of Kansas City, Mo. The teacher's interest must be stimulated by private conversations with other teachers, and by meetings for the discussion of educational subjects.

Principal Boyden of the Normal School, Bridgewater, Mass., Superintendent Blodgett, Syracuse, N. Y., Colonel Parker, Principal Greenough, Normal School, Westfield, Mass., and Superintendent Chalmers, Grand Rapids, Mich., participated in the discussion of this subject.

Charles DeGarmo, President of Swarthmore College, Pa., gave a paper on "The Value of Literature in Moral Training," and Charles M. Andrews, Professor of Literature, Bryn Mawr College, Pa., one on "The Value of History for Moral Culture." Mr. DeGarmo said our moral training is weak in its effect upon the disposition of the pupil. We need to discover a sympathetic interest in adequate ideas of conduct, and to secure a proper disposition toward them. Our main line of advance in moral training must proceed less in the direction of inculcation of mere maxims than in the ethical utilization of all the materials of study and especially of literature. This subject adapts itself perfectly to every grade of intelligence.

Professor Andrews stated that in history we are dealing with life itself in its best sense. It is the study of the growth and development of humanity as an organic whole. The study of history will make men less dogmatic in their opinions; they will judge the past with generosity and the present with caution. It leads the individual to unselfish coöperation in building up a higher standard of morality. It shows the final triumph of good over evil, and thus strengthens the moral life of the present time. Moreover, it shows that moral ends must be gained by means that in themselves are justifiable. It inculcates humility, moderation, and patience. It should, therefore, occupy an important place in any scheme of education and especially in that of a democracy.

W. A. Baldwin.

Andover, Mass.